

1607/492(1).

Exhortation

1607/492 . T O

Those who are Shut up from
our Society, and deprived
at present of Publique In-
struction.

Which may be useful to o-
thers also who have any
feeling of Gods Judgments.

By *Symon Patrick* Rector of
St. Paul Covent Garden.

L O N D O N,

Printed by *J. Hayes* for *S. Thomson*, at the Sign
of the Bishops Head in *St. Pauls Church-*
yard. 1665.

EXPORTATION

Those who are shut up from
our society and deprived
of the light of the Gospel in
the most remote parts of the
world.



Which may be said to be
the only way to have any
feeling of God's judgments.

By Thomas Paine, Author of
"The Rights of Man."

Printed by S. Kneass, at the
"The British Library," London.
1794.

Beloved,

IT is so natural to every one when he is in distress, to think of those sins which he presently concludes have brought him in to it, that I am willing to presume there is none of you, but hath reflected on himself before this time, and askt his soul, *What have I done?* Affliction is the season for consideration. It is the mother of many wise thoughts, and much knowledge, especially of mens selves; to whom they are too great strangers till that day comes. In a time then of such great Calamity as this, when the Hand of God presses you so sore; to suppose you to be without all serious reflections on your waies, would be to imagine you as hard as the Stones. We cannot believe you are so insensible. Now that Death presents it self so near, and looks you in the very face, it is not possible but that you begin to consider how you have lived, and what preparation you have made for another state: Now sure you ask your selves these questions with some passion, *What have we done?* and *What shall we do to be saved?* Nay, my Charity carries me so far as to think, that in such straits as these to which you are reduced, you have done a great deal more; and proceeded to make many resolutions of amendment. You have vowed to God (I perswade my self) that if he will spare your lives, you will forsake those sins which have made you so miserable; and live hereafter in a stricter observance of his holy commands. You are willing to receive your lives from his hands on these conditions. You ask them on no other terms, but that they may be better
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employed for him. And desire him (I presume) to deal with you, as you seriously mean to become new men.

These things therefore passing for granted; I will not fill up this little Paper with earnest exhortations to repentance, for which the Rod of God calls so loudly; but rather direct you to make it such a repentance as shall never be repented of. And awaken your selves, I beseech you, to consider what I say. Sit down and pause a while as you go along, to urge every thing upon your heart. And what is said here in brief, make long discourses of to your selves; labouring at this present to supply the Preachers place.

I. And *first*, Since you are now looking into your selves, I beseech you search to the very bottom of your hearts. Though it be a great way thither, yet God hath now given you time and leisure enough to descend into it. As near as you can therefore unravel all your life, that you may see what the whole course of it hath been. Reflect, I mean, not only on some sins that are nearer at hand, but look on those that are further off, and lie more out of your view. Lay your selves naked and examine your selves all over, both without and within, that you may find out every thing which is offensive to God. Else I must tell you, this affliction will only make hypocrites, in stead of producing good Christians. The fruit of it will be only a partial reformation, which in effect is none at all. Shall I assist you a little in this great affair?

Know then that the sins which you are in search of, are commonly (for more easie understanding sake) comprehended under these three heads: 1. Such as are directly against God. 2. Such as are an injury also to your neighbour. And 3. Such as are against your selves.

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Some of which likewise consist in doing what you ought not to have done: and others in not doing those things which you ought to have done.

And therefore in your inquiry after the offences against the Majesty of God, you must consider such things as these. Have you not been wont to blaspheme the Name of God and his Son? Is it not your custom to swear and curse; to deride Religion; and to make a scoff of Holy things? Or at least have you not been very negligent in your thoughts of God? Have you used your self to call to mind, who made you? Have you spent any time in pondering his great love in sending his Son to you? Have you not resisted many motions of the Holy Ghost? Have you not omitted to worship God as you ought, by daily prayer, and giving him thanks? Have you constantly attended his publique service? Have you not staid at home, when you ought to have been in the House of God? Behold then (before you go any further) your sin in your punishment. You may not go thither if you would, whither when you might have gone you would not. O consider, how many happy opportunities have you let pass unregarded? How many blessings have you received and never minded from whence they came? How long have you lived and yet been as without God in the world? carrying no fear of a supream Power in your mind, no love to the Father of your being; no gratefull sense of the benefits which he doth you every moment. For these things you ought to be ashamed and confounded. It ought to make you blush to lift up your eyes to heaven, when you reflect on these neglects. For there is nothing so unnatural as this, to forget him that made you, that sustains you, that provides you with a world of good things continually, both for soul and body.

And now when you turn your thoughts from hence (as soon as sorrow and grief will let you) to look upon the offences which may be committed against your neighbor, you will find them to be so many, that it will cost you some time to do no more then know them. For as many persons as you are acquainted withall, or stand in relation unto, so many sins may arise by your injuries or neglects of them. Some of these persons (for example sake) are your *equals*. Consider therefore; have you been alwaies just in word and deed to them? have you defrauded no man? have you never slandered nor backbited your neighbours? have you not been a make-bate among them and disturbed their peace? was it not your wont to pass the time in jeering of them? or passing rash censures and judgements upon them? Is there no malice nor hatred in your hearts to any of them? have you pardoned them when they wronged you? Do you not bear an old grudge to some or other? Are you not forgetfull of benefits, and revengefull of injuries? Have you succoured, as you were able, those that were in need. Have you not been without compassion to the poor, and unmindfull of those that were sick? All these things must be examined: and many more will present themselves to your thoughts, if you do seriously employ them to find out those faults that are to be amended.

And again you will see (if you look about you) that there are other persons who stand *above* you, requiring other regards then your *equals* do. And here it is much to be considered, whether you have dutifully carried your selves to your naturall parents. Whether you have honoured the King, with your spirituall Governours and Pastors, as you ought. And whether your Masters and all your betters have had their due respect. Have you not been irreverent in your behaviour or speeches to
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some of these? Have you not disobeyed their just commands and contemned their orders? Have you not causslessly quarrelled with their injunctions, and found fault with their government? Nay hath it not been your manner to revile them and speak evil of them? Are you not ready to believe all the evil that is spoken by others; and to sit in judgment upon your Governors? Do you not sleight and undervalue their authority? Have you not mean thoughts of them, never considering that they are set by God over you? I doubt these are sins that have spread themselves far more then the Plague. And therefore narrowly examine your selves about them, that none of them may escape your notice.

And then cast your eyes on other persons that are *below* you, who may charge you it is possible with many sins more. Consider what care have you taken of your children, your servants, and all others who are committed to your charge; that they may want nothing that is needfull either for their souls or bodies? Have you made a conscience to instruct them in their duty, or to send them to be instructed? I cannot instance in all particulars, unless I should write a Book; and therefore I desire those who are Parents only to enquire about this one thing which is of great moment. Have you put your children in mind often of the vow they made in Baptism? Do you remember them of their promise to forsake the devil and all his works, and to keep Gods holy will & Commandments? Do you tell them that God hath taken them to be his children, and that they may not therefore do as they list, but as he would have them? Do you teach them the Catechism which is appointed for their instruction; and take care they come to him that hath the cure of souls among you when it is required, there reverently to receive his admonitions? I fear these things are too much neglected, if not despised, or

esse we should see Christian people in better condition. If any of you therefore intend now to make one good Christian, let him call himself to an account in this particular.

You see (my Brethren) already, that it is a very serious business to amend, seeing there are so many things to be set in order. And yet you have not heard all that you have to do if you design a reformation. For you are to consider how you have respected your selves, to whom there is a great reverence due, and whom many things do very much misbecome. As for example, is it fit for a rational creature to mind nothing else but getting of wealth which he must so shortly leave? Hath he nothing else to care for but what he shall eat, and what he shall drink, and wherewithall he shall be cloathed? Is it seemly for him to wallow in drink, to burn with lust and filthy desires? How doth he look when he is full of wrath and transported by his choller? Is he not quite transformed? doth he not seem to be beside himself? Examine your selves then in these things; in matters of temperance, of chastity, of meekness, of patience, of heavenly mindedness, and such like. And think you are not your selves, till you be reclaimed from the sottish vice of drinking and tipling; from beastly uncleanness; from fury and rage, which are no less brutish; nay from earthly mindedness and the love of money, which is a very gross stupidity.

But I see it will not consist with the brevity I design to say any more on this head, but the rest must be left to your own conscience. Only let me briefly note *two* benefits which you will receive by an impartial sober weighing of what hath been said. *First*. You will see that it is a work of time and pains to amend so many things

things as you may find amiss; and therefore will require not only your present, but your future in-
deavours. Especially if you consider, that in all the ca-
ses I have mentioned, there are these things likewise to
be examined and pondered. The frequency of those
sins; the delight you took in them; the expence of time
and money they put you too; the degree of boldness
and shamelessness; the scandall they brought along
with them; the dishonour they did to Religion, to ho-
ly daies, and holy things; the many reproofs and
checks they were against; with all the vows and resolu-
tions which you broke that you might commit them.
If these things, I say, be weighed, you will not easily be-
lieve your selves, if you should fancy that the business is
already done, which I suppose was but begun together
with this affliction that is upon you. And now I
mention your affliction, it gives ~~us~~ occasion for the *se-*
cond note which I would have you make; viz. That your
punishment is a great deal less then you deserve.
That you have not received so many stripes, as you have
committed offences. Here being such a vast number
of sins which you may find your selves guilty of, it will
make you cry out (if you be touched with any pious
sense) *It is of the Lords mercies that we are not consumed.*
Why doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment
of his sin? There is no reason that we should repine un-
der his afflicting hand, but rather bless his goodness
that we are not in a far more lamentable condition.

II. And that you may not be more miserable, nor
after severer strokes here fall into everlasting condem-
nation; I beseech you as you love your souls, stir them
up, by the grace of God, to a through and speedy refor-
mation in every particular wherein you must charge
your selves to have done amiss. You see your work; do
not

not go about it with a dull and an heavy heart; but with earnestness, with zeal and fervour of spirit, as those who are infinitely concerned in it. The danger you are in sure will awaken you. The judgements of God which hang over your heads will chase away all sloth and laziness. And especially the sad sense of your former neglects will make you give all diligence that this business may not miscarry in your hands. Which that it may not,

III. I beseech you in the next place that your purposes of reformation (which I hope you are now forming) may proceed upon a right ground, and flow from a sound and lasting principle of obedience: *viz.* not meerly from the fear and dread of Gods present judgements, but from a true fear of himself, and a reverend regard to his Sovereign authority. Not meerly that you may now escape out of his hands and save your lives; but that you may be really his friends and live to him. If your resolutions take their beginning from the heavy stroke which is upon you, yet they must take their growth and confirmation from the consideration of the cause of it, which is nothing else but your sins against God. These you must hate more then the Plague it self. You must purpose to amend out of an abhorrence you have to all disobedience against his Majesty; out of a love you bear to his blessed nature and holy will; out of a sense that he is your Lord and Governour; that all his Laws are just and good; that he is your chief good and last end, in agreement with whom only you can be happy. For if it be nothing else but the present calamities which awaken you; when they are gone you will fall asleep and be secure in your sins again. But the Fear and the Love of God will alwaies inspire you to do well, and they will never let you return to folly any more.

more. These will also make you entire in your obedience. They are an universal cause of all vertue. They will not suffer you to be partial in your duty, but thoroughly instruct you to every good work. And here I beseech you again to have a respect to all Gods Commandments, for it can never be too often remembred. Place not your amendment only in increasing your devotion, but in bettering your manners. *This is the damning hypocrisie of this Age, that it sleights all good Morality, and spends its zeal only in matters of Worship and Devotion.*

IV. And now I have but one request more to make to you, which you will easily grant, if the foregoing be entertained. It is this: If God be pleased to restore you to your liberty again (which we continually pray for) be sure to make good the Vows which now are upon you. Let it be seen that indeed the love of God and Religion is in your hearts, and that your purposes are not the fruit of a present passion. Cannot you remember that you have made many promises to God before now, which were never performed? Hath not a sickness, or a Sermon begot some resolutions which all vanished away? O search I beseech you (if you love your eternal life) after the cause of this fallness; for it will betray your purposes again. Was it not because you did not thoroughly hate the sin which you promised to leave? Was it not because a right sense of God and goodness had not settled it self in your minds? Did not your disaffection to sin arise only because the temptation was gone? Was not your appetite then surfeited and sick, which in time recovered it self? Then just so it will be hereafter when you go abroad again. You will renew your friendship with your evil courses, unless you have some good principles in you stronger then all
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your sinfull appetites and then all the solicitations of the world.

If you mean therefore to be as good as your word, you see it is of absolute necessity to settle some firm unalterable principle of new obedience in your soul. The former advice must be diligently heeded, unless you intend to lose all your labour : and so must these also that follow.

1. The better to assure your future obedience, I wish you to make some experiment upon your selves, while you remain within doors. There are some things that can be done at this very time : Let us see you perform them, if you would have us believe that you mean to amend. Cannot you now be patient, and not think hardly of God or men ? Cannot you bless God for this affliction, and pray that it may do you good ? Cannot you spend your time very much in meditation, in prayer, and in examining your selves ? Cannot you seriously desire the prayers of good people for you ? Cannot you reform that vain and evil communication which we hear many of you entertain at your Windows with idle and loose people, that are not at all affected with the judgements of God upon the Land ? If you will not do these, never believe any of the promises you make of amendment in all the rest.

2. And then I entreat you to resolve by the grace of God to continue those holy exercises of prayer, meditation and examining your selves when you come abroad again : in order to make you perform the other parts of your duty. They are not all Religion (as men foolishly think) but they are the helps and means to bring us to the practise of all that God commands. Therefore be sure you spend some part of every day in calling to mind your purposes, and the grounds or reasons on which they were made. Put your selves in mind of

of God, of your dependance on him, and of the love and duty you owe him. Earnestly beseech him for Jesus his sake to assist you with the grace of his holy Spirit that you may keep your word. And take an account of your performance as often as you can. And let me take the liberty to tell you it is easie here to read your sin in your present chastisement. You have not loved to be retired, and so now God shuts you up whether you will or no. Shut up your self therefore hereafter in secret: get aside from all company and be alone with your selves and God if you mean to be saved. You have complained its like in times past, that you had no time to spare from your necessary occasions. Behold! now God hath taken away this objection from this busie City. Now they have leisure enough who would find none before. Now he hath left them nothing else to do but to consider their waies. Their Trades stood lately in their way to Heaven: they could not pass thither through their Shops. And so now he hath shut up their shop doors, and removed their trade from them. He hath made room now for Religion, which could find no place a little while ago. He would let that into their houses and hearts which was barr'd out by innumerable imployments. He seems to bid them now be wise Merchants for better things, and to follow a traffique with heaven, which they would have no commerce withall before. This if our people will not see they must die (I think) of incurable blindness. And let all those whose eyes are opened, have a care to amend this great, this first fault, which makes so many others.

3. To which let this request be also added, that you would all remember to confirm your resolutions by frequent and reverend receiving of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper. A duty too much neglected, though it be

be instituted on purpose for a remembrance of Christs love in giving his life for us ; then which there is nothing more powerful to move our hearts to all love, and obedience. This every little business in the world can put by. For this men can find no time ; and so their resolutions are starved and die for want of so good nourishment as this holy feast would afford them. If then you would have them maintained in life, do not deny your souls the benefit of this divine food, but take all opportunities to refresh and strengthen them therewith.

4. It would be of great use also if you would often seriously reflect upon the indulgence of God in sparing your lives when so many thousands were every week cut off. Call your eyes back upon this mournful time, and think why was not my grave digged among the rest. You cannot imagine the mercy of God hath so mean an end as to continue you here only to eat and drink, to get wealth, and enjoy the rest of the pleasures of the flesh. The world is in no such need of you that you should stay only to take up a room in it. It would still be full enough if you were gone. Your living when others are dead is of no consequence, unless it be to prepare for a better life. Use it therefore for that end, and think that you are delivered to glorifie your Creator by new obedience.

5. I should have desired you withall often to think of death ; and not to look upon it as a great way off, because you have escaped this stroke: It may lie in ambush for you in another place, and therefore you are to expect that every where, which waits for you no body knows where.

6. And lastly, I should have commended to your most serious meditation the promises of the life to come ; beseeching you not to lose so great a good for want of perse-

persevering a few daies longer in that good mind
wherein you now find yourselves by the grace of God ;

But then I should leave no room for a few words to
all truly pious Souls, who may lie under this calamity
as well as others. To you at last, O dear Friends, this
short Discourse addresses it self. And though I know
you will not think yourselves unconcerned in all that
hath been said, but find something either to be amen-
ded or compleated in you ; yet the promises of eternal
life (just now mentioned) seem above all other things
to offer themselves as most proper for your thoughts at
this season. The hope of this will be your greatest com-
fort in this affliction. This will support you, and make
you to rejoyce in the midst of tribulation. What though
you have the common portion of others in this present
time, since you have a great deal better prepared for
you hereafter ? Nays, what though you be now excluded
from external communion with the people of God ?
the time is coming when you shall enter into a most
happy fellowship, from which there will be no separa-
tion. Do not therefore faint under this affliction, nor
be weary when you are corrected. Humbly submit your
self to your heavenly Father. Resign your self into the
hands of his wise Love, that he may dispose of you as
he pleases. Believe firmly that he is good even when
he smites. And think that he who will give you eternal
life, would not deny you a less thing if he saw it best.
Remember the patience of *Job* ; or rather set before
your eyes the example of our blessed Saviour, who was
made perfect by sufferings. Think that he pities you ;
and that withall he looks upon you to see how you will
now behave your self. Let him behold a Soul meek,
contented, couragious, rejoycing alwaies ; for there is
not a more lovely spectacle that he can be presented
withall.

withall. And let him see your belief of his Gospel so strong and lively, that you do not tremble to pass through that gate, which he hath entred before you. Follow him chearfully to the grave it self. Remember that he hath overcome Death, that King of terrors: That he hath despoiled it of all its power, and made it innocent to his followers. Let it not affright you therefore; but look upon it as a necessary passage to a better life. Welcome it as a friend, and do not take it any longer for an enemy. Receive it with such a countenance, as if you believed it to be a messenger sent to fetch you home to your Fathers house. In these good thoughts I leave you; and heartily commit you to the love and care of our dearest Lord. Beseeching you, now that our publique Instructions cannot reach you, this private Message may be embraced with as much affection as it is sent to you. And beseeching him also that you may be as strongly moved to a speedy consideration of these things, as I was to the writing of them, for the use of those Souls that are committed to my Charge.

Amen.

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